

REMARKS

This Amendment is in response to the non-final Office Action mailed March 9, 2004. Claims 1-14 are pending in the present application. Claims 1-14 were examined and rejected in the Office Action. Claims 1-5 have been amended to further clarify the claim scope in accordance with the Substance of Interview summarized below and to overcome the rejections outlined in the non-final Office Action. New claims 15-20 have been added to further differentiate the claim scope. No claims have been canceled. Examination and reconsideration based on this Amendment and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Substance of Interview Summary

A telephonic interview occurred between the undersigned, Murrell Blackburn, Examiner Gautam Sain, and Primary Examiner William Bashore on Thursday, May 20, 2004. The interview covered the rejections to claims 1-3 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Microsoft Excel 2000 (version 9.0.4402 SR-1, copyrighted 1985-1999; hereinafter "Excel 2000"). The interview also covered the rejection to claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Excel 2000 in view of Microsoft Windows NT (version 3.3/4.0, copyrighted 1981-1998; hereinafter "NT").

The Examiners indicated that the elements of claim 1 need further clarification in view of the undersigned's description of "value", "worldwide format", and "base format". The Examiner also indicated he would consider whether the cross-referencing element of claims 5 and 12 is a distinguishing feature as compared with the reference. Specifically, the Examiner indicated that the arguments made by the undersigned may have merit however further examination is still required.

This written response is thus, submitted in follow-up to the telephonic interview for consideration by the Examiner, as it is believed to have placed the application in condition for allowance.

Claim rejections-35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-6, 8-10, 13 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Excel 2000. Independent claims 1 and 5 have been amended and Applicants respectfully submit that Excel 2000 does not teach each and every feature of Applicants' amended claims 1 and 5.

Claim 1

Applicants' claimed invention as recited in amended claim 1 is drawn to a computer-implemented method for rendering a number in a spreadsheet program module. The method involves, among other features, the steps of (1) reading a worldwide number format of the number wherein the worldwide format includes a locale specifier of the number and a base format of the number and (2) using the base format and the locale specifier to render the number therein applying the worldwide number format to the number.

In contrast, the reference Excel 2000 teaches an actual cell value or raw number 1b displayed in a formula bar that is unaffected by the format applied. The actual cell value is the raw number to which a format is applied and not the actual format. There is also no indication of a local specifier or a base format included in 1b. (See Excel 2000 pg. 1, 1a and 1b).

The Office Action also states with regard to claim 2, that Excel teaches a local identification number and cites page 2 of Excel 2000 in support. Applicants respectfully submit that the text of page 2 specifically points out that Excel 2000 has different versions depending on what country or region of use in the world (e.g. "available only in the Thai, Vietnamese, and Indian versions of Office 2000"). Excel 2000 cannot read a worldwide format because it is limited to specific regional versions. Therefore Excel 2000 does not provide a single version having a format that is operative worldwide. Thus, Applicants submit that the cell value 1b and page 2 of Excel 2000 do not teach or suggest reading a worldwide number format that includes a locale specifier and a base format as recited in Applicant's claim 1.

Excel 2000 also does not teach or suggest (2) using the base format and the locale specifier to render the number therein applying the worldwide number format to the number because, as described above, Excel 2000 does not teach a format that can be applied worldwide such that the spreadsheet handles numbers properly throughout the world and the spreadsheet appears as originally drafted. The numbers in one regional version of Excel 2000 may appear differently in another regional version of Excel 2000 thereby contributing to potential inaccuracies.

Claim 5

With regard to amended claim 5, Applicants claimed invention as recited in amended claim 5 is drawn to a computer-implemented method for entering a number into a cell in an electronic spreadsheet of a spreadsheet application program module. The method involves, among other features, the step of (1) cross-referencing the category indication and locale

identifier to determine a plurality of sample number formats with a plurality of underlying number formats.

In contrast, Excel 2000 teaches a syntax for Euroconvert. Euroconvert is a command that includes a target argument which is a three-letter string corresponding to the ISO code of the currency to which a user wants to convert. The command and argument taught by Excel 2000 does not indicate any cross-referencing taking place between a category indication and a locale identifier. The command and argument also only determine a single number format and not a plurality of sample number formats. (See Excel 2000, pages 1, item 1f, page 4, and page 6). Thus, Excel 2000 does not teach cross-referencing the category indication and locale identifier to determine a plurality of sample number formats with a plurality of underlying number formats as recited in Applicants' claim 5.

Claims 2-4 and 6, 8-10, and 13-14

At least because claims 2-4 inherit the language of amended claim 1 and claims 6 and 8-10 inherit the language of amended claim 5, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 2-4, 6, and 8-10 are also allowable over Excel 2000.

Further, at least because claims 13-14 inherit the language of independent claim 11 which was not anticipated by Excel 2000, claims 13-14 are also allowable over Excel 2000.

Claim rejections-35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 7, 11, and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Excel 2000 in view of NT.

Claim 7

The Office Action concedes that Excel 2000 does not teach Applicants' claim 7 but depends on NT to cure the deficiencies of Excel 2000. The Office Action states "Windows NT teaches receiving the locale identifier from a selection from a Locale dropdown menu." Applicants disagree and submit that NT only teaches adding an input to the listing of installed input locales and layouts in an input locale heading. There is not a dropdown menu of locales present in NT from which users pick locale identifications. Users must manually input locales in NT. (See NT, page 1). Thus, Excel 2000 in view of NT does not teach or suggest receiving the locale identifier from a selection from a Locale dropdown menu as recited in Applicants' claim 7. Thus, claim 7 is allowable over Excel 2000 in view of NT because it would not have

been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify Excel 2000 to include a locale identifier in a Locale dropdown menu.

Claim 11

In regard to independent claim 11, Excel 2000 in view of NT does not teach or suggest a Locale menu comprising a plurality of locales to select as the locale identification for the number. As described above with respect to claim 7, NT requires manual input of locales and does not teach a drop down menu to select locals from but only displays locales after they are manually inputted. (See NT, page 1). Thus, Applicants' claim 11 is also allowable over Excel 2000 in view of NT.

Claim 12

At least because claim 12 inherits the language of independent claim 11, claim 12 is also allowable over Excel 2000 in view of NT.

New Claims:

New claims 15-20 have been added to provide claims of varying scope from those initially filed. Applicant asserts that these new claims are also allowable over the cited references. For example, claim 16 recites that the category indication and the locale identifier determine a calendar type of the number where neither reference discloses such. Secondly, claim 17 recites wherein the category indication and the locale identifier determine a number shape of the number. Neither reference teaches a category indication and a locale identifier determining a number shape of the number.

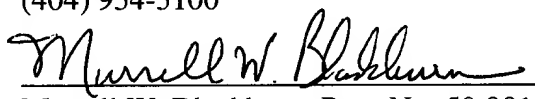
Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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